

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 MC-02 PM-03 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00 L-02 NSC-10 NSCE-00 EUR-10

DRC-01 EB-03 /061 W

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R 131500Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0536

INFO AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 1186

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS MCAP LY IT BY

SUBJECT: TRANSFER OF US-LICENSED APC'S?

1. AT THE SEPT 1 NATIONAL DAY MILITARY PARADE HERE THE US-LICENSED, ITALIAN ASSEMBLED M-113 ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS AND M-109 SELF-PROPELLED HOWITZERS ACQUIRED BY THE LARG WERE PUT ON DISPLAY FOR THE FIRST TIME. THEIR APPEARANCE WAS DULY NOTED BY THE DPL CORPS AND OF COURSE THE ASSEMBLED FOREIGN PRESSMEN. SINCE THEN WE HAVE RECEIVED AND PARRIED SEVERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TRANSACTION FROM BOTH QUARTERS.

2. TODAY ARNAUD DE BORCHGRAVE, NEWSWEEK EDITOR, ASKED IF I HAD HEARD THAT EIGHT OR NINE M-113'S HAD SHOWED UP IN BURUNDI, PRESUMABLY LIBYAN APC'S. I FIRMLY DENIED THAT I HAD HEARD ANY SUCH REPORT. HE SAID HE THOUGHT HIS SOURCE MIGHT KNOW, BUT DID NOT REVEAL IT.

3. I SUSPECT HIS SOURCE IS FRENCH AMB GEORGY, WITH
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WHOM HE DINED LAST NIGHT. INTERESTINGLY, WHEN I CALLED

ON ITALIAN AMB MAROTTA TODAY AND IN PASSING ASKED IF HE HAD HEARD THE STORY, HE SAID THAT HE HAD NOT BUT THAT IT SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING THAT GEORGY MIGHT FLOAT. I POINTED OUT THAT, IF THE STORY IS TRUE, IT RAISES THE QUESTION OF ITALIAN COMMITMENTS TO US RE END-USE CONTROL OF US-LICENSED EQUIPMENT. MAROTTA WAS SCEPTICAL THE STORY WAS TRUE.

4. MAROTTA CLAIMED THE NEW ITALIAN GOVERNMENT, AFTER TESTING THE ATMOSPHERE IN WASHINGTON ON A VERY HIGH LEVEL, IS DELIBERATELY "GOING SLOW" IN MEETING A LARG DESIRE TO PURCHASE ADDITIONAL M-113'S. CONCURRENT GOI/LARG DISCUSSIONS ARE GOING ON, HE SAID, ON "CULTURAL, ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL RELATIONS". THE IMPLICATION WAS THAT NEW M-113'S MIGHT BE A QUID PRO QUO IN THAT BROADER CONTEXT.
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